The true Method of Propagating Religion and Loyalty.

A

SERMON

Preach'd in the Pariſh Church of

St. *Mary* in *White Chapel*,

On SUNDAY the 24th of *October*, 1714. in the Afternoon.

By *JOSEPH ACRES*,
Vicar of *Blewberry* in *Berkſhire*.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

To the INHABITANTS of the Pariſh of St. *Mary* in *White Chapel.*

GENTLEMEN,

I Will not ſay I was inſulted while I was preaching the following Sermon; but I muſt complain of the uncommon Uſage I met with as ſoon as I came out of the Church. I am ſure violent Hands were laid upon me; it is given out that I narrowly eſcaped with my Life, you your ſelves, at leaſt ſome of you, know beſt what danger I was in, and who were the true occaſion of that Madneſs of the People. It is hard that a Miniſter of the Church of England *can't preach againſt the perſecuting Temper of the Papiſt, and give his preſent Majeſty and the Branches of his Royal Family their juſt Character, but immediately a Mob muſt be ſpirited up againſt him. If I had offended either againſt Church or State the Law was open, any of you knew where to have had redreſs: But if a Multitude muſt be Judge, and have the Execution in their Hands, conſider what may be the diſmal Conſequences of it, and how eaſily they may be turned, even againſt your ſelves.*

I was brought up in one of the Univerſities of this Land, I had Holy Orders by Epiſcopal Hands, I have been either Curate or Vicar for above Twenty Years, I conſtantly read all the Prayers, and Preach twice every Lord's Day, and never omit ſo much as one Collect upon the Account of Sermon; and I have taken much Care and Pains to breed up the Youth of my Pariſh in the Principles of Chriſtianity: and muſt I be thus us'd?

I know I have had many Enemies for almoſt as long time as I have been in Holy Orders, for my ſtrict Adherence and active Endeavours to maintain and juſtifie the Revolution. I am ſenſible our All depends upon it.

I believe my Discourse was very acceptable to a vast number of you. I address my self only to those who confess that Nature will resist against Principle, of which I have had sad Experience.

I must own, that the Violence of our Enemies, their Railings and Revilings, might perhaps have carried me, as some of you think, too far in my Zeal for our Establishment, and for that which was the glorious Occasion of it; but I must do this Justice to all the World, more particularly to him in whose room I stood when I delivered this Sermon, as to assure you, that whatsoever may have offended any of you in it, flow'd from my particular Zeal, without communicating it to him or any other Person whatsoever; so that I alone may bear the weight of your Indignation, without letting any share of it fall upon any other inocent Person, and then I will be very easy under it.

I can with a quiet Mind bear what was done against my self, and pray and practise with our B. Savior, Father forgive them, for they know not what they do. *But in a calm temper consider how justifiable your resentment was for my mentioning our Great General, who, by the Blessing of God on his wise Conduct, was the happy Instrument of reducing the exorbitant Power of* France.

Above all, it was a Grief of Heart to me to hear some of you revile and curse the late King William *of Blessed and Immortal Memory, who did great things for us both living and dying; but the most Glorious Act of his whole Life was, his bequeathing the inestimable Legacy of the Protestant Succession, the invaluable Fruits whereof we now enjoy. May this Royal Family continue to Reign over us till Time is no more; which is,* Gentlemen, *the constant Prayer of Your Injur'd, but Forgiving,*

Friend and Servant,

JOSEPH ACRES.

Psal. 78. 4.

We will not hide them from their Children, ſhewing to the Generation to come the Praiſes of the Lord, and his Strength, and his wonderful Works that he hath done.

THIS Pſalm is a beautiful Epitome, or a ſhort Abſtract of the great and wonderful Works God had done for his People; and the Pſalmiſt does in Variety of Expreſſions command Parents to hand them down to their Children with unanſwerable Reaſons to perſuade them to the Practice of this neceſſary Duty. For he eſtabliſhed a Teſtimony in *Jacob*, and appointed a Law in *Iſrael*, which he commanded our Fathers, that they ſhould

ſhould make them known unto their Children, that the Generation to come might know them, even the Children which ſhould be born, who ſhould ariſe and declare them to their Children; that they might ſet their Hope in God, and not forget the Works of God, but keep his Commandments.

They were not to hide from their Children, either the Word or the Works of God, what Diſcoveries God had made of himſelf unto them, *Deut.* 6. 7. *And thou ſhalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou ſhalt talk of them, when thou ſitteſt in thy houſe, and when thou walkeſt by the way, and when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up.* You may read in the Verſes before, what it was that they were to teach them with ſo much Care, *v.* 4. *Hear, O Iſrael, the Lord our God is one Lord*; to teach them the Being and Attributes of God. *Gen.* 15. 1. *I am thy ſhield, and thy exceeding great reward.* This is the great Spring of all Religion, *that God is, and that he is a rewarder*

warder of them that diligently ſeek him; he will be their Shield to ſecure and defend them from all Dangers; that he is a God of *infinite knowledge*, and that his *underſtanding is unſearchable*; that *all things are naked and manifeſt before him*; that *he knoweth our down-lying and our uprising, and is acquainted with all our ways*; that *he underſtandeth our thoughts afar off*; that *there is not a word in our tongue, but lo he knoweth it altogether*; that *the darkneſs hideth not from him.* Above all, that he is *gracious*, and *full of compaſſion, long-ſuffering, and plenteous in goodneſs and mercy*; that he is *good to all*, and that his *tender mercies are over all his works*; that like *as a father pitieth his child, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* Such Notions as theſe ſtrike an Awe upon the Minds of Children, makes them not only fear, but love and delight in the Meditation of ſuch an Infinite, and Glorious, and Good Being. Our Bleſſed Saviour himſelf calls this the firſt and great Commandment, when ſuch great Truths

are

are inſtill'd in their Minds in their younger Days, as they grow in Years, the more reaſon they ſee for the belief of them. But on the other hand I muſt verily ſay, my Brethren, there is a Fault amongſt us; ſome lay too much in the obſerving ſome Rituals, and others in not obſerving of them; and in the mean time neglect Fundamental Truths, and their Children grow up indifferent to all Religion. Oh that we would conſider the Kingdom of Heaven is not in Meat, and Drink, but in Righteouſneſs, and Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt.

Not only the Word, but alſo the Works of God. And that this was a very early Practice, appears by the Character the moſt High gives his Servant *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 17. *Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?* v. 19. *For I know him, that he will command his children, and his houſhold after him, to do juſtice and judgment.* What was that which *Abraham* would teach them? Why, the juſt, but ſurprizing Judgments of God upon

upon the Wicked Inhabitants of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, who vex'd the Soul of righteous *Lot* day by day with their unrighteous Deeds; the Cry of whose Wickedness came up into the Ears of the Lord of Hosts, who rain'd down Fire and Brimstone upon them, and consumed both them and the Cities of the Plain.

When *Israel* was brought out of *Egypt*, the Memorial of the Passover was commanded, *Exod.* 12. 26. *And it shall come to pass when your children shall say unto you, What mean you by this service?* v. 27. *That you shall say, it is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover.* They were to teach them the Reasons for the Institution of this Feast: A Lamb was to be kill'd, and the Blood poured out, to shew that Christ our Passover should be sacrific'd for us; to be eaten with bitter Herbs, to represent to them, that the *Egyptians* made their Fathers to serve with Rigour, and made their Lives bitter with hard Bondage. They were also

to teach them the ſurpriſing Works of God after they came out of Slavery, *Iſa.* 38. 19. *The fathers to the children ſhall make known thy truth.* How God divided the Waters of the Red Sea, and *Iſrael* paſs'd through the midſt; the *Egyptians* were all drown'd, there was not one of them left. How *Moſes* ſmote the Rock and the Waters guſhed out, and followed them as a River: How he gave them Manna from Heaven, and fed them with Angels Food: How he rain'd Fleſh upon them as Duſt, and feather'd Foul as the Sand of the Sea: How he gave them a Law from Mount *Sina*, wrote with the Finger of God: How he puniſh'd their Murmuring, ſo that they were deſtroyed by the Deſtroyer: How all their Fathers died in the Wilderneſs, except *Caleb* and *Joſhua*, who were of another Spirit, and brought up a good Report of the promis'd Land. How God brought them into *Canaan*, and when engag'd in Battle, the Artillery of Heaven was on their ſide; the Lord caſt

down

down great Hailſtones upon their Enemies; and at another time the Sun and Moon ſtood ſtill to lengthen out the Day, that *Iſrael* might be avenged of them. And that it was their Practice to teach their Children, appears from *Judges* 6. 13. *And where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of?*

I ſhall now give the Reaſons why we ſhould not hide from our Children the Law and the Works of God, becauſe it is the moſt ſeaſonable time to learn. The Light they receive in their Youth can never be diſputed out. *Train up a child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. Come, you children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Whom ſhall I teach knowledge? Whom ſhall I inſtruct in wiſdom? Them that are weaned from the milk, and them that are drawn from the breaſt. Precept upon precept, and line upon line, here a little and there a little,* Drop by Drop, as we pour Liquor into narrow Mouth Veſſels. We muſt feed their

Souls as we do their Bodies, often and but a little at a time. Our Bleſſed Saviour commanded St. *Peter* to *feed the Lambs* as well as the *Sheep*; and there are *Babes in Chriſt*, as to *Age*, as well as *Knowledge*, which muſt be fed with Milk, as well as others with ſtrong Meat. And 'tis part of the Character of a good Shepherd to carry the *Lambs* in his *Boſom*: The Influence of it does appear upon *Timothy*, who by his Mother and Grandmother was taught the Form of ſound Words, and from a Child knew the Holy Scriptures, which were able to make him wiſe unto Salvation; and who was afterwards an eminent Evangeliſt in the Church of Chriſt. How could *Obadiah* have feared the Lord from his Youth, if he had not been taught when young?

We have conſidered the Directions that were given to the *Iſraelites*, and their Practice; we ſhall now conſider what our Fathers have done by us, and

and what we ought to do by our Children.

Our Fathers have not hid from us, that in former Ages there was a Famine of the Word in this Land; that they wandered from Sea to Sea, and from the North even to the East; that they ran to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord and could not find it; that his Word was precious in those Days; that our Forefathers gave large Sums for small Fragments of the Holy Scriptures, a few of St. *Paul*'s Epistles, and ran the risque of all in the purchase of them; that *Egyptian* Darkness then overspread this our Native Country; that Mothers have been burnt at the Stake for teaching their Children the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments in the Vulgar Tongue; that the Inhumanity of Popery was so raging, that Children have been forc'd to set fire to their own Parents, a Barbarity beyond any thing that was ever practis'd amongst the most savage *Indians*, no Merits or Services can secure any from the

Cruelties

Cruelties of that uncharitable Religion. And when afterwards God was pleased to rescue the Souls of his People from Destruction, his Darling from the Lyons; when the Light of the Gospel did shine more and more, till it came to the Light of a more perfect Day; when the Holy Scriptures by the supreme Authority were translated into their Mother Tongue, what did Parents then do? they sent their Children to School to learn to read, and then vast Crouds went to the Church to hear them: and so mightily the Word of God grew and prevail'd, that it is amazing, as well as delightful, to look over the solid Answers that the meanest Mechanicks gave to their most learned Persecutors. I hope I shall never forget the poor Woman, that having put all her Adversaries to silence, *have you no more to say? I was an honest poor Man's Daughter, and I have driven the Plough many times before my Father, but in the Cause of God and his Truth I will set my Foot against the best of you all.*

Our

Our Fathers have not hid from us the many ſecret and open Attempts againſt the invaluable Life of the Glorious Queen *Elizabeth*, eſpecially the Invaſion of Eighty Eight, when the Armada of *Spain* was ſtyl'd invincible, and we were upon the very brink of Ruine; then did God ariſe with healing in his Wings, and made bare his Arm for the Salvation of his People, when we knew not which Way to turn, nor what to do: then did God command and raiſe the ſtormy Wind, and lift up the Waves of the Sea; they mounted up to the Heavens; they ſunk down to the Depths; their Soul melted becauſe of Trouble. We read the Stars in their Courſe fought againſt *Siſera*; the Winds and Seas fought for us. And what was ſaid of haughty *Pharaoh* and his formidable Chariots may be apply'd to them; *they ſank into the bottom as a ſtone, they ſank as lead in the mighty waters.*

Our

Our Fathers have not hid from us the Powder-Treaſon, when the Jeſuits try'd to out-do the Prince of Darkneſs, and Hell it ſelf was amaz'd at their moſt helliſh Actions; when they reſolved to blow up both Friends and Foes, and, like the *Romiſh Legate* at another place, kill all God knows who are his; reſolving they ſhould not taſte of *his* Mercies, whatever they might have in the Mercies of the Almighty.

We will not hide from our Children what ſome of us, at leaſt I my ſelf, have ſeen, when Maſs, the Abomination of Deſolation, was ſet up in our Schools of Learning, and all Arts were uſed to wheedle our Youth to apoſtatiſe from the Faith that was once delivered to the Saints.

Lord

Lord! what were the Hurries and Diſtreſs that we were in and under at that time, when ſo many, like *Demetrius*, forſook us having lov'd this preſent world; how then did we repent our folly in oppoſing the Excluſion Bill, and truſting our Religion and Liberties in the hands of a Popiſh Prince? But our good God was better to us than either we expected or deſerved.

We will not hide from our Children, that we are oblig'd to our faithful Allies the *Dutch*, for all that is dear to us as Men or Chriſtians: how in the Day of Diſtreſs, they enabled the late King *William* of Bleſſed Bleſſed Memory, then Prince of *Orange*, to come to our Aſſiſtance: He came, and God was with him. So many ſignal works of Providence, that we might plainly ſee, that God was on our ſide: God made all oppoſition to fall before him, till he became our King.

We will not hide our Ingratitude to our generous Deliverer. What was ſaid of *Iſrael*, after they were brought out of the Houſe of Bondage, may be apply'd to us, *Then believed they his Word, they ſang his Praiſe, they*

ſoon forgat his Works, they waited not for his Counſel.

How ſoon did we forget the great Deliverance? How ſoon did we murmur againſt the Bleſſed Inſtrument? How did we not only ſay, but ſome of us contrive, to make us Captains, and return to the Slavery and Fleſh-Pots of *Egypt*.

Ah brave King *William!* who were they who hung ſo heavy on thy Chariot-Wheels.

We will not hide the Victories and Succeſſes of the Renowned General, who never fought a Battle but what he won, and never beſieged a Town but what he took. Some have endeavour'd to ſully his Reputation, and lay his Honour in the Duſt: ſo they did by *David*, when he had ſlain *Goliah*, but *Jonathan*, the next Heir, ſpake well of *David*; he put his Life in his Hand, and ſlew the *Philiſtines*; and the Lord wrought a great Salvation for *Iſrael*, *Thou ſaweſt it, and didſt rejoyce.* His preſent Majeſty has done him Juſtice; and now God has brought forth his Righteouſneſs as the Light, and his Integrity as the Noon Day; as the Sun obſcured for a while with Miſts

and

and Fogs, but quickly ſhines more bright.

We will not hide, that there ſeem'd but a Step between us and Death; the Pit was dug, and the Net ſpread, but Bleſſed be God, our Soul is eſcaped as a Bird out of the Snare of the Fowler, the Snare is broken, and we are eſcaped. Our Enemies travailed with Iniquity, conceived Miſchief, and brought forth Falſhood; their Miſchief is very likely to return upon their own Heads, and their violent dealing to come down upon their own Pates.

What Convulſions did a Popiſh King enjoying the Crown formerly put the Nation in? and how often have our Tears return'd ſince it has been our conſtant Prayer, that God would continue the Succeſſion in the Proteſtant Line; and preſerve it from all the Arts of treacherous and deceitful Men? Our Prayers have had a ſpeedy and a gracious Anſwer; we may ſay by comfortable Experience, that our God is a God hearing Prayer; we have waited to hear what God will ſay; and he hath ſpoken Peace unto his People, and to his Saints. O! let us not return again to Folly.

We will not hide that God has now ſet upon the Throne a King that is Juſt, ruling in the Fear of the Lord: one that will be a nurſing Father to the Church of Chriſt, that will be the Miniſter of God for Good; that will put on Righteouſneſs as a Robe, and Judgment as a Diadem; that will be Eyes to the Blind, and Feet to the Lame; and the Cauſe which he knoweth not, he will ſearch it out, break the Oppreſſor in pieces, and pluck the Spoil out of his Teeth: a King that for many Years, has been a Sovereign Prince; and one that has governed his People with ſo much Softneſs and Juſtice, that he is the delight of Mankind, that has been followed with Floods of Tears by his former Subjects at his departure; one that we have all the reaſon in the World to believe, will execute Juſtice in Mercy; one that ſets upon the Throne of Righteouſneſs, and ſcattereth all Iniquity from before his Eyes, takes the method of King *David* in the Choice of his Servants; He that worketh Deceit ſhall not dwell within his Houſe; he that telleth Lies ſhall not tarry in his Sight—his Eyes are upon the Faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with him.

I ſaid you are Gods, and Children of the moſt high, but you ſhall die like men, and fall like one of the Princes. Kings muſt die as well as other Men, and ſometimes their Families die; but here is a numerous and hopeful Iſſue, a Royal Prince, every way qualify'd both for the Camp and the Cabinet, who in the Day of Battle expos'd himſelf to encourage others, and look'd Death in the Face with an undaunted Courage: May he outſhine the *Edward*'s and the *Henry*'s, both *Creſſy* and *Agincourt* Campaigns; but may the Bars of our Gates be ſo ſtrengthned, that there may be no occaſion of either; may his Court go beyond that of Prince *Henry*, who was Brother to his Royal Highneſs's Great Grandmother; when Drunkenneſs was the moſt loathſom Sight, and Oaths and Curſes were the moſt offenſive Sounds; who deſpis'd thoſe invidious Diſtinctions that were then ſet on foot, and which have ſince wounded us almoſt to Death, and, like a noble Chriſtian, declar'd, that he lik'd that Preaching beſt that came neareſt his Heart.

We

We will not hide, that *Moſes* refus'd to be call'd the Son of *Pharaoh's* Daughter; we have a Royal Princeſs, that upon her Marriage with another Perſon might have been immediately a Queen, and quickly after an Empreſs, choſe a more humble State of Life, rather than to make Shipwreck of Faith and a good Conſcience. What a rare thing for a young Lady that has been bred up in the Softneſs of a Court, to decline the Pomp and Glory of the World! but now God has and will exalt both her and hers; God has made her as a fruitful Vine by the ſides of the Houſe, and her Children as Olive-Plants round about her Table; *Great Britain* was never bleſſed before with ſuch a numerous Iſſue from a Proteſtant Princeſs; may ſhe live to ſee her Childrens Children, and a more glorious and honourable Peace than we enjoy at preſent.

The Church is far from Danger; the Church is ſafe and flouriſhing, when we have ſo bright a Pattern, and are in ſuch excellent Hands.

May the King live many Years, till he is white like the Almond-Tree; and when he

he comes to die, may he go to his Grave as a Shock of Corn that is fully ripe; that in his Days the Righteous may flouriſh, and abundance of Peace at Home as long as the Earth endures.

May the Prince, like *David*, go in and out before us, and fight our Battles for us (if there be occaſion) and may he behave himſelf diſcreetly in all his Ways.

May the Princeſs continue to be a joyful Mother of Children, and may more Sons and Daughters be added to her already numerous Iſſue; may ſhe live to breed up her Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord.

May all of us be obedient, not only for Wrath, but alſo for Conſcience ſake; let us never fail to put in Practice the Direction of St. *Paul*; *I exhort therefore, that firſt of all Supplications, Prayers, Interceſſions, and giving of Thanks be made for all Men; for Kings, and for all that are in Authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life, in all Godlineſs and Honeſty.*

F I N I S.

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